

# PLAIN TALKS

August 1982





# MAIL BOX

## THE COVER

Two Lumberton High School students man a fire hose as part of their work as junior firefighters with the Lumberton Volunteer Fire Department.

The group of youths received national publicity earlier this summer when local newspapers and NBC's Today Show interviewed them.

GSUer Tommy Evans, an apprentice lineman in Beaumont, is district fire chief and junior fireman training officer for the student outfit. Lane Mitchell and Jack Tiger were caught on film by a *Beaumont Enterprise* photographer.

Read more about the outstanding youth group in the article on pages 10 and 11.

Ron McKenzie  
Gulf States Utilities  
Port Arthur, Texas  
Dear Mr. McKenzie:

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Gulf States Utilities and to Mr. Jim Fernandez for the excellent program he presented to the Sabine Area Chapter of Credit Unions recently.

Mr. Fernandez presented a very interesting and informing program. I would also like to commend Mr. Fernandez for the excellent way he conducted a very difficult question and answer portion of his program.

Gulf States Utilities is fortunate to have an employee with the expertise of Jim Fernandez.

Our organization hopes he will accept an invitation to visit with us again.

Sincerely yours,  
Mae Terro  
Program Director  
Sabine Area Credit Unions

Becky Watson  
Gulf States Utilities  
Lake Charles, La.  
Dear Becky:

My associates and I enjoyed so very much our recent visit to GSU's Nelson No. 6 coal-fired plant. We learned so much and took a number of pictures which will be useful in classes and seminars in the future. We particularly appreciated Messrs. Sellers' and Guyote's excellent tour.

Thank you for making the arrangements on our behalf. We would be pleased to have you visit us at LSU whenever you are in Baton Rouge.

Sincerely,  
Betty P. Lee  
Coordinator  
LSU Energy Programs Office

Shivaun Tessier  
River Bend Energy Center  
St. Francisville, La.  
Dear Ms. Tessier:

I want to express my sincere appreciation for the outstanding presentation and tour of the River Bend facilities to the Recruitment into Engineering of High Ability Minority Students (REHAMS) group on June 16. Also, I want to extend thanks to Randy Helmick for the informative tour of the construction site.

Field trips are an essential part of our program. Almost without exception, the students have indicated they were highly impressed by what they saw on this trip and they have a better understanding of the problems associated with energy production. Despite the adverse weather conditions, they felt this trip was a distinct highlight of the program.

Thank you for the opportunities,  
Jack K. Poplin  
REHAMS Director  
Louisiana State University

## PLAIN TALKS

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Employees who change residences or offices should fill out company mailing-address-change forms (GSU0012-00-79) and return them to the mailroom in the Edison Plaza. GSU publications, departmental mailings and other company information are not automatically forwarded; addresses must be corrected when employees move.



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## Magazine lists Beverly Trahan

Beverly Trahan, an industrial engineer for Consumer Services in Baton Rouge, was recently featured in an article in *Baton Rouge Magazine*.

The article described the GSUer as "challenged," mentioning that she holds "a spectrum of positions and offices that would awe even a workaholic."

Among those posts are her positions as president of the Mayor's Commission on the Needs of Women, president of the Baton Rouge Business and Professional Women's Club, chairperson for the Board of Regents Committee that advises senior-level engineers in the state's universities and a member of the Society of Women Engineers.

Furthermore, Mrs. Trahan is an active member of the Scotlandville Jaycee Jaynes and the Zeta Phi Beta social service sorority.

Trahan told the magazine, "My husband just remarks that the word 'no' isn't in my vocabulary." At home, the petite Gulf Stater often busies herself at the sewing machine. Since she stands only 4'11" in shoes, she must design and sew many of her clothes.

## GSUer helps nab two burglars

Winnie meter reader Bert Manning helped local law officials nab two burglars on March 29, according to Buddy Johnson, Winnie superintendent.

Manning was reading his route in Stowell when he noticed a black pickup truck parked on the side of the road a few hundred yards from a woman's home. After he read the meter at the house and was driving away, Manning noticed two men running across the nearby pasture

toward the truck. Although they were first running in a stooped position, the GSUer watched them straighten up to run faster and observed that one man was wearing gloves. Suspecting they had burglarized the house, Manning wrote down the license plate number as he drove past the pickup, then drove to the next house and called the sheriff's department.

At the lawmen's request, he returned to the burgled house, where he gave deputies his statement. The two burglary suspects were arrested at a road block in Crystal Beach a short time later. They were carrying two pistols and some other items stolen earlier from an Anahuac home.

Chambers County Sheriff Chuck Morris sent Manning a letter of commendation. According to Morris, the two suspects were believed to have been responsible for more than 50 burglaries in the area.

## Office donates old photograph



Lorraine Dunham (pointing), Delbert Zimmerly and Merle Murphy.

An old photograph showing a tanker passing through the drawbridge leading to Pleasure Island has been donated by GSU's Port Arthur office to the Port Arthur Historical Museum.

The late George Moon, a *Port Arthur News* photographer who chronicled much of Port Arthur's industrial growth of the late 1930s, shot the aerial view.

Lorraine Dunham, a senior engineering assistant in Port

Arthur who had admired the photograph for many years, spearheaded the donation effort. "It was on the wall in our old department at Lakeshore and Houston avenues. When we moved to Ninth Avenue, we took the tanker with us," she recalled. After a recent remodeling, Miss Dunham missed the picture and found it in storage.

"It just made me sick," Miss Dunham said. She promptly wrote her supervisor, suggesting that the photograph be restored and donated to the museum.

Delbert Zimmerly, operating superintendent, was with Miss Dunham when the restored, framed picture was accepted for the museum by Merle Murphy, secretary of the museum.

An engraved plate on the photograph reads, "Aerial view of 'We Oil the World' Port Arthur, Texas taken in 1945 by photographer Geroge Moon. In the foreground, Texaco Tanker Contreas silently heads seaward leaving in its wake old landmarks."

## Investments given for Thrift Plan

Investments made by the Thrift Plan trustee in July 1982, covering employee deductions and company contributions through June 1982, included the purchase of 66,768 shares of common stock at a total cost of \$767,832. The average cost per share was \$11.50.

The trustee also deposited \$280,955.56 in savings with First Security Bank of Beaumont and \$40,710.75 in the guaranteed fixed income fund with Equitable Life Assurance Society.





## 'Hercules' Combats 'Monster'

by Don Pumphrey

Greek mythology records Hercules as the slayer of the Hydra, the many-headed serpent which would sprout two heads to replace one that had been cut off. Centuries later, Gulf States Utilities faces a 20th Century monster called "hydrilla."

This creature is neither the fire-breathing nor the human-menacing variety, but rather one that creates problems for the cooling system at the Lewis Creek generating station in the company's Western Division.

Actually, hydrilla is an Asiatic aquatic weed which has been clogging the water intake system in the reservoir at the plant. The problem was discovered in July 1978 and has resulted in the spending of several hundred thousand dollars in an effort to control the spread of the weed and to prevent damage to equipment, reports Ernest Cannon, mechanical foreman at Lewis Creek.

In 1980 the weed suddenly died off and large quantities of it floated to the surface forcing the company to construct a floating wire barrier ahead of the plant's water intake screens. Even with the barrier in place, there were times when the accumulation of weeds and trash forced a reduction in the plant's generating capacity. When this occurred, workmen had to clean the build-up from the barrier with pitch-

forks and small open bow boats.

For five weeks last year, the company hired a contractor to cut the hydrilla and remove the cut weed from the reservoir. This year, the company opted to fight the problem alone by purchasing a 20th Century "Hercules" to slay the prolific "monster" weed. The barge-like vessel is equipped with an adjustable forward cutting bar capable of cutting the weed at a depth of five feet. Once cut, the weed is hauled aboard the vessel by conveyor, then pulled to the rear of the cargo compartment by hydraulic rake.

The pontoon-type harvester has a cargo capacity of more than five tons and goes about her task at the brisk pace of eight to 10 miles per hour, reveals Cannon. Once the barge is fully loaded, the skipper steers to the bank and unloads by simply reversing the loading procedure. Unloading takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

Legend describes Hercules as a fine physical specimen, and the hydrilla harvester is an equally imposing sight. Cannon says she is a floating fortress consisting of a 90-horsepower diesel engine, several hydraulic motors and two paddle wheels at the stern to propel and steer. This 20th Century legend also sports a sleek figure, with a width of 16 feet and an overall length of 83 feet, including the submerged cutting

blade.

Despite the harvester's awesome proportions, the weed it seeks to destroy is well equipped to protect itself. Originally discovered in Florida, the noxious weed has spread throughout the south and even to some northern waters. It is a light-sensitive plant that can grow to any depth as long as it receives sunlight. As a means of aiding its own growth, this hearty weed filters the water, thus increasing the water's clarity and enabling the hydrilla to grow at great depths.

According to Cannon, practically all the lakes of southeast Texas are infested to some degree. Due to the rapid spread of the weed, the Texas Legislature has become involved in an eradication study. One method under study involves the use of grass-eating carp which have been introduced into Lake Conroe, which is near the Lewis Creek reservoir. Although there are currently no definitive results, legislative approval will be needed before any such eradication program could be undertaken.

Until a more permanent means of removing the weed is found, GSU will continue to battle the hydrilla with the only tool at its disposal — the hydrilla harvester.



# Customer Contact Clerks:

by Susan Gilley



*Judy Waldrep waits on a customer in the Mid County office.*

**C**onfidante, diplomat, detective.

All three titles describe the roles played by customer contact clerks throughout the Gulf States system.

But Terrell G. "Butch" Franklin, director-division accounting services, dubs the customer contact clerks "very special people" who "are the face of Gulf States" in the communities they serve.

The best time to see the clerks juggle their multiple roles is around the first of August, when a searing summer sun and whirring air conditioners combine for higher bills that cause some customers' tempers to sizzle. The first of the month is also the time when elderly customers receive their social security checks and pay their bills.

By 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 3, a long line was forming in the Northern District office of the Beaumont Division. Many of those in line had made the familiar route from the Silsbee post office, where they had picked up their checks, to a nearby bank and then on to the GSU office to pay their utility bills.

Clerks are privy to all sorts of reasons for late payment or non-payment, as well as getting glimpses of human nature at its best and worst. For example, one customer who visited the Silsbee office that day was an older woman who came in to pay her son's bill. "He's about three months behind and he was going to pay it out over a couple of months," she confided apologetically, "but I said, 'No

way.' I always pay my bills on time."

And Silsbee's Sue Irvine found herself counseling one elderly customer who asked how to reduce his bill. After pointing out to the man that he was using about the same number of units as the year before, she told him that he would need to use his window air conditioner less to cut his cooling costs.

Tact is another useful skill when dealing with irate customers. On Aug. 2, the four Silsbee clerks handled 110 telephone calls, of which 23 callers inquired about their bills and nine others complained about high bills. (Clerks must also know a little bit about everything going on in a local office, according to Northern District Superintendent Robert Sheffield. He noted that other callers that day had questions about street lights, a damaged transformer and procedures for turning on, off or transferring service.)

While there have always been some customers who would not pay their bills on time, the downturn in the economy has worsened the problem and required GSU's customer contact clerks to become virtual detectives. For instance, when taking new applications, the clerks must check past records to see if an applicant has ever been a non-paying customer. Standard questions asked of new applicants include their marital status. Mrs. Irvine explains, "We need to find out as much information as possible. If a customer is separated from his spouse, he may have some uncollected bills. Gulf States can lose a lot of money that way."

The clerks also get a first-hand look at some economic trends.



# GSU's "Very Special People"

According to Dorothy Lloyd, a senior clerk based in Silsbee, the Northern District office is serving a record number of new customers who live in mobile homes. "That's all that young people can afford," she notes. Mrs. Lloyd adds, "There are so many more hot checks now, even on good customers." And the veteran Gulf Stater reveals that she has noticed more and more Northern accents among Silsbee customers. Many times, however, the transplanted Northerners "give a disconnect notice within a month — they just can't find a job."

Franklin, who is based in Edison Plaza, maintains that customer contact clerks are in a unique position. "How people feel about Gulf States is almost completely dependent upon these clerks. We have to make sure that the face we present to the public is pleasing. We can't always give customers everything they want — we have to be prudent in our business dealings — but we have to be tactful and courteous, even in turning down unreasonable requests."

The way the company accomplishes that is to hire clerks on the basis of a personal interview and psychological testing. After they are on the job, they undergo continual training. Currently, the company is utilizing audio-visual skill training under on-going development by the GSU Training Department. Video cassette tapes are also being made which focus on a single conservation tip — information which the clerk can then pass on to customers.

Franklin theorizes that customer contact clerks are sometimes the focus for customer anger because "people get

frustrated when they overextend themselves with too many bills." While many bills are a set amount each month, the utility bill is a variable — and an easy target for customers' wrath.

"We teach the clerks that this is not a personal thing. We teach them that they represent Gulf States to these people," Franklin says.

He continues, "A successful customer contact clerk is one who can keep that perspective in mind, and it takes a mighty big person to be able to do that."

Despite the pressures, the clerks have been doing a good

job, according to customer attitude surveys. "Over the years, Gulf States has experienced a tremendously good relationship with our customers. That's because we have employees who do care and can convince our customers that they care," Franklin insists.

And Franklin suggests that the success of a clerk is important to every single GSU employee because "the way that people feel about our company has a lot to do with the way that our neighbors feel about us as employees of GSU."



*Sue Irvine waits on Silsbee customer*



# Winners Receive Savings Bonds

Company officials in the Baton Rouge, Beaumont and Western divisions recently presented \$50 savings bonds to the winners of GSU's first poster contest for children of employees.

A brother-and-sister team took top honors in the Baton Rouge Division. Polly Marie Bush, an 8th grade contestant, and Tom Bush, a 7th grade contestant, also toured the River Bend site and lunched in St. Francisville. They are the children of Donna B. Bush, a Baton Rouge Mail Services employee.

Fourth-grader Danny Barry, a student at St. Anthony's in Beaumont, won the top prize in that division. His award was presented by Beaumont Division Vice President Arden Loughmiller. John E. Barry of the River Bend Nuclear Group is his dad.

In the Western Division, Gene Brown, Cleveland superintendent, honored Bryan Cruse, a 5th grader at Shepherd Elementary, as the top entrant. Bryan is the son of Melinda Kruse of Division Accounting in Cleveland.



*Melinda and Bryan Kruse, Gene Brown*



*Danny Barry, Arden Loughmiller*



*Polly and Tom Bush*

# Dateline/Highland Avenue...



Customers in Beaumont's south end are now served by a new Highland Avenue office.

Located at 4262 Highland, the office is staffed by Pluma Dorsey of Customer Accounting and Billy Creel of Division Consumer

*Pluma Dorsey opens the door of the new Highland Avenue office.*

Services. According to Mrs. Dorsey, the new facility opened on June 14 as part of an effort "to better serve our customers in this area."

The new bill payment center is located in a small shopping center that also has a barber shop. Business hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1-5 p.m.



# Frank Robinson:

## Candidate for County Judge

During his years as Huntsville superintendent, Frank Robinson was in a good position to observe daily life in Walker County.

And now, during his retirement, Robinson hopes to improve that life a little by winning the title of county judge.

If Robinson, 66, does win the election this fall, it will mark the first time a Republican has taken the bench in the southeast Texas county. In fact, this is the first time since the Civil War when county residents "didn't know who the judge would be until fall," Robinson notes. The post traditionally goes to the top Democratic contender in the spring primaries, with the general election only a formality.

Although the white-haired, portly Robinson has "voted Republican for 20 years," he has been a card-carrying party member for only the last few years.

### ***Interest in community***

Robinson, who joined Gulf States in 1938 as an iceman, says his campaign stemmed from "being interested in the community where I live and wanting to get some things done." Friends had already urged him to seek the post. In the past, he held school board and city council seats.

A healthy mixture of urban and rural influences, Walker County has a population of about 40,000, with about 25,000 concentrated in the county seat of Huntsville. Major employers in the county include Sam Houston State

University (where Robinson earned a bachelor's degree in business), the Texas Department of Corrections and forest-product concerns. In addition, Huntsville is only about 70 miles from Houston.

### ***Platform outlined***

Features of Robinson's campaign platform include plans to develop a county-wide garbage disposal system, county-wide fire protection and to build more permanent county farm-to-market roads.

By the time he retired in 1981, Robinson's GSU career had spanned 43 years and had taken him from posts in Huntsville to

Cleveland and Woodville and then back to Huntsville.

Altogether, he spent about 26 of those years in Huntsville. The people he met on the job then are among the voters he talks to on the campaign trail now, and the superintendent's job honed administrative skills that are essential for the judgeship.

When Robinson is not campaigning, he spends time with his wife Louise. The couple has three children — Polly, who lives in Palestine; Nancy, now living in San Antonio, and Frank Jr., who resides in Houston — and seven grandchildren.





# GSUer Leads Young

**B**ad news may make most headlines, but Gulf Stater Tommy Evans claimed his share of media attention recently with an old-fashioned people-helping-people story.

In late June, Evans, an apprentice lineman in Beaumont, was featured on NBC's Today Show. A month earlier, his work with the junior firefighter program operated by the Lumberton Volunteer Fire Department was

Photo by Fred Jones

page one news for the Beaumont Journal. Evans, 26, is a district chief and junior fireman training officer. Himself a graduate of Lumberton High School, Evans proclaimed the Lumberton High youths involved in the program as "a great bunch of kids. They got it (the program) all going. I was just there, helping them," he insisted.

And Evans admitted that the national publicity given the story

"thrilled us to death. It was a once-in-a-lifetime deal." The Today Show got wind of the story after checking with the NBC affiliate in Port Arthur, Channel 4 television station. Evans and the 12 young men who made up last year's crop of junior firefighters were interviewed by Bert Medley, associate producer of the morning show.

Evans is the son of another GSUer, Kit Evans of Division Ac-



*Apprentice lineman Tommy Evans is junior fireman training officer.*



*Junior firefighter Rob Wilson gathers hose.*



# Firefighters

Photos courtesy of the Beaumont Enterprise

counting, and his wife, the former Jiana Hoy, used to work in Nuclear Records.

The junior firefighters are charged with the safety of the area while the adult firemen are away at work during the day. "Lumberton would be in bad shape without them," Evans claimed.

According to Evans, when a fire alarm sounds, the Hardin County Sheriff's Office is notified

and the lawmen then call the high school. Participating students are instructed to report to a burning car or house.

In the Beaumont newspaper account of his work, Evans was quoted as admitting the idea of leaving school at a moment's notice has a certain appeal to most high school students. But he maintained that those who are in it for the novelty soon find the seriousness of the situation takes

away some of the fun.

The junior firefighter program is restricted to students 16 to 18 who maintain passing grades and pass a four-month probation period. The program was started in Lumberton in 1975 and Evans took it over in 1978. Evans had been a volunteer fireman for a year at the time.

Parents of participating youths must sign a release of obligation.



*Rob Wilson, Lane Newell, Richard Huff, Chris Comer and Jack Tiger learn the firefighting basics.*



# SERVICE AWARDS

**40**  
years



**Ramey Kirkwood Jr.**  
Plant Production  
Louisiana Station

**30**  
years



**Edwin B. Smith**  
Materials Management  
Beaumont

**20**  
years



**Betty T. Dickschal**  
Division Accounting  
Navasota

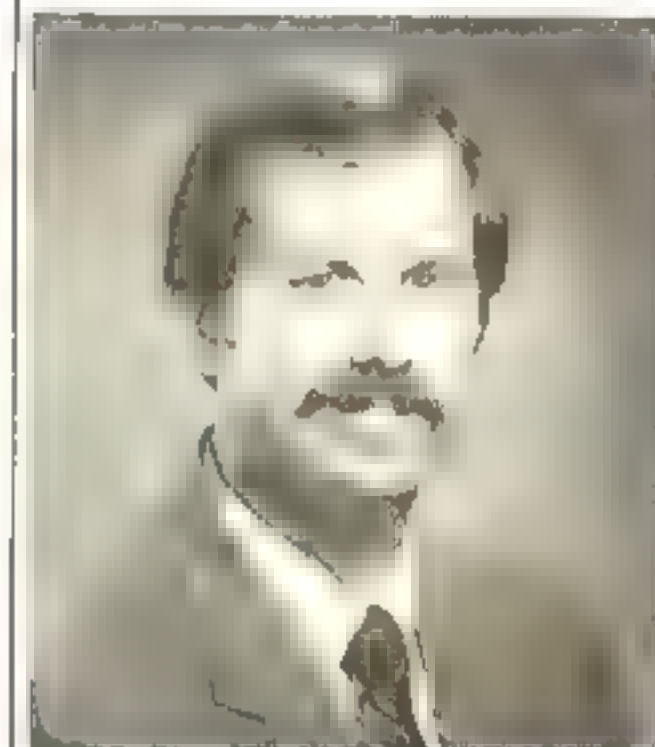
**10**  
years



**Kathy L. Bourgeois**  
Electric T&D  
Orange



**Alexander Valerie Jr.**  
Plant Production  
Nelson Station



**Robert W. Dowies**  
Computer Applications  
Beaumont



**Grady Smith**  
Rates & Regulatory  
Affairs  
Beaumont



# RETIREE UPDATE

## Borne cited for marathon

Arsey Borne, a 74-year-old Gulf States retiree, was cited earlier this year for his participation in a running, walking or jogging marathon to raise funds for non-public education.

Borne won the prize for being the oldest participant to spend a cold, rainy, windy day going around Lamar Cardinal Stadium on behalf of the Beaumont Diocese of the Catholic Church and two non-Catholic schools. And 19 members of Borne's Port Arthur family participated, making them the largest participating family.

A total of \$90,163 was raised in pledges by 1,374 volunteers in the spring marathon.

## Minner retires this spring



When Jim Minner was honored with a retirement party on April 30, a large number of friends, former co-workers and Port Arthur city officials gathered to roast him. In a more serious vein, Port Arthur Mayor Bernis Sadler read a proclamation citing Minner's outstanding service in civic affairs. Minner is mayor pro-tem of Griffing Park.

Minner (at right) is pictured with longtime retiree Sabre "Pop" Guidry of Abbeville,, who also attended the festivities.



## Johnson dies in Lake Charles

Fred Johnson, 81, of Lake Charles died at 12:01 a.m. on May 11. He was a former division manager for the Lake Charles Division who had retired from the company June 1, 1965.

A native of Mississippi, he had resided in Lake Charles since 1943.

Survivors include his wife, Jessie Alice Johnson, of Lake Charles, and one brother, Paris Johnson of Angie.

Memorial donations may be made to the First United Methodist Church of Lake Charles, family members said.

## Sideliners hold July meeting

The Sideliners of Port Arthur Division decided at their July 20 meeting to retain the current roster of officers until January and to begin holding quarterly business sessions.

During the meeting in the Port Arthur GSU auditorium, the members heard James "Cowboy" Fernandez speak on the topic, "Making this a Better World to Live In," reported *Plain Talks* correspondent Ruth Vaughan.

## Deaths listed

*Plain Talks* has learned of the following deaths:

— George T. DeLaMatyr, 72, of Beaumont died on June 17. He retired in 1975 as supervisor-engineering research and communications. Survivors include his wife, Madeline Moran DeLaMatyr of Beaumont; two sons, George DeLaMatyr Jr. of Corpus Christi and Richard DeLaMatyr of Richardson, and five grandchildren.

— Elmer Sudderth, 82, of Leonard, Texas, died on May 5. He retired in 1965 as a general line foreman in Lafayette. Survivors include his wife, Earlene Sudderth of Leonard.

— Edward "Candy" Toles, 86, of Rosedale, Louisiana, died on April 28. He was a 22-year veteran of Gulf States. Survivors include his wife, Ophelia Crump Toles of Rosedale; one daughter, Marcella Toles Pickney of Rosedale; one brother, Thomas Toles of Rosedale; one sister, Harriet Toles Landry of Oakland, Calif.; seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.





## Team takes 2nd place

Four Gulf Staters played on a coed volleyball team that won second place in their league in a Downtown Beaumont YMCA competition.

Unofficially dubbed "Six — The Hard Way" because they had such a tough time assembling the six-person team, the group included GSUsers Diana Realme, Mildred Scott and Kevin Scott, all of the Purchasing Department, and Pam Gordon of Nuclear Licensing. Other team members were Kenneth Sam and Diana's husband, Raul Realme.

Shown shortly after their victory are (from left) the Realmes, Mildred, Kenneth, Pam and Kevin.

## Nelson dies in accident

Gary L. Nelson, 21, died July 8 while working near Vinton. He was a lineman-3rd class based in Lake Charles.

Survivors include his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Christon Nelson of Lake Charles; two brothers, Dennis Nelson of Lake Charles and Christon Nelson of Carliss; four sisters, Kathleen Gautreaux of Sulphur, Doris Clark, Virginia Pearson and Kristine Nelson, all of Lake Charles; and his grandmother, Beulah Foreman of Eunice.

## Rachel LeBert named all-star

Rachel LeBert, 8, was named to the all-star team of the Twin County Little Dribblers Primary League.

A member of the Cowgirls team, the little girl is the daughter of Betty LeBert, section head-invoice processing in Beaumont, and Robert LeBert, serviceman-1st class in Sour Lake.

Mrs. LeBert and another daughter, Terry Linn Fontenot, 20, coached Rachel's team. She admitted that it was the first coaching experience for either of them. Nevertheless, that didn't stop the girls from winning first place in the league.



*Terry Fontenot and Betty LeBert (back row) pose with their winning team, the Cowgirls. Rachel, 8, is kneeling at center front.*

## Divisions hold golf tourney

Two divisions of the company challenged each other on the greens July 10 during the first Port Arthur-Lake Charles Divisional Challenge Golf Tournament.

Lake Charles Division Vice President Ted Mienscher proposed the tournament and the Port Arthur Division hosted the event.

A "traveling" trophy was awarded to Port Arthur, which came out on top. In addition, Port Arthur teams won first, second and third place awards.



## Baby son joins family

Little William Scott "Will" Gilley made his appearance in the William and Susan Gilley family on May 30, when he was born in St. Elizabeth Hospital, Beaumont.

He weighed 9 pounds, one-half ounce.

Mrs. Gilley is a member of the Public Affairs staff in Beaumont. The child's uncle, Edward D. White, is a draftsman in Beaumont.

Will has two sisters, 14-year-old Crystal and 10-year-old Mona, both of LaMarque.

## Picnic features wagon rides

A horse-and-wagon ride was among the offerings of the annual safety picnic in Conroe May 15.

Employees and family members from throughout the Western Division participated in the outing. Other features were horseback riding, volleyball championship games and a tug of war. A team of Conroe line department employees, who dubbed themselves "The Fryers," won the tug of war under the direction of team leader Willie Hoffart.



## Petitjean dies in accident



John C. "Chris" Petitjean, 21, died July 29 while working in Maurice. He was a lineman-4th class based in Lafayette.

Survivors include his wife, Lynette Dupuis Petitjean, a clerk in the Lafayette Accounting Department; and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Petitjean of Conroe, Texas. The elder Petitjean is a right of way supervisor in GSU's Conroe office. Other survivors include one brother, Keith Petitjean of Lafayette; one sister, Brenda Istre of Luling; and his paternal grandmother, Hilda Petitjean of Rayne.



## Latiolais leaves Willow Glen

Willow Glen employees gave Darrel Latiolais a farewell party recently when he left his post as chemist at the power plant.

Latiolais is now chemist for System Production at Sabine Station.

## Reviews to include two poets' works

A Gulf States' employee whose father also works for the company and the son of yet another employee have learned that their poetry has been accepted for publication by different reviews.

Margaret Ann Marston, a utility worker and the daughter of Floyd Marston of the Gas Department, will have one poem published in the October 1982 issue of *Poet Magazine* and another piece in the October issue of the *Poet's Anthology of Premiere Poets*. Another poem appeared in the spring issue of *New Laurel Review*.

Jeff W. Fails, the son of Lake Charles communications foreman Wayne Fails, recently received two \$10 cash prizes for two of his poems entered in the *Midwest Poetry Review's* national poetry contest. Young Jeff's entries were among only 20 selected for publication. The youth hopes to publish a book of his poetry someday.

## Young returns to work

Tass Young, district service representative for the Port Arthur Division, returned to work on light duty in late July after being off for several weeks after suffering burns in a house fire.

He and his wife were badly burned when their home was destroyed by fire.

According to *Plain Talks* correspondent Barbara Broussard, GSU employees from throughout the system donated safety certificates, money and miscellaneous items for the Young family. In addition, two area dealers donated a ceiling fan and a shotgun, which were given as prizes in a raffle. All proceeds went to the family.



## Davis named top umpire

John Davis, a collector for the Conroe area, has been named "Umpire of the Year" by District 14ASA.

Davis is a 10-year veteran of Gulf States.



## Child takes swimming class

Kimberlin Christine Ravey, the 11-month-old granddaughter of Jennings serviceman-1st class Wallace Bertrand, recently graduated from a two-week beginner's swimming course.

The infant swimming program was offered through the University of Southwestern Louisiana, which presented diplomas to the young graduates.

Little Kimberlin is the daughter of Rodney and Nina Ravey of Jennings.





## Andrade has new baby boy

Lafayette employees honored co-worker Mary Ellen Andrade with a going-away party July 30 as she prepared to begin her maternity leave.

On Aug. 3, she gave birth to a 7-pound, 11-ounce baby boy named Jarrett Randall Andrade.

Mrs. Andrade, who is a clerk in the Lafayette storeroom, has two other children, Tracy and Blane.



## Pace to enter ceramic replica

Bobby Pace, 14, recently completed assembling a ceramic replica of GSU's Government Street Substation yard — a project he plans to enter in the 1983 Dobe Dabbers Ceramic Show in the Baton Rouge Centroplex.

Young Bobby, the son of substation mechanic-1st class Robert L. Pace, created many of the items free-handed since molds did not exist for the parts. He also hand-painted the entire project. Among his tiny creations are vans, trucks, poles, bulldozers and fork lifts.

Bobby's mother, Rose, has been working with ceramics for 3½ years and she now lets her son do all her fine, detailed work. He also knows how to load and fire his mother's kiln. The youth won first place and best of show in his division when he entered his first project in the 1981 Dobe Dabbers competition. He did not enter the 1982 edition of the show because he was too busy with school, hunting and helping his dad build a camp.

Bobby will be a freshman at Denham Springs High School this fall.

## Sharon Moore wins cafeteria prize

Sharon Moore, a clerk in Fuel Accounting, won a large felt cowboy hat on Aug. 11 when she came closest to guessing how many dried pinto beans the hat would hold.

The hat, filled to the brim with beans, was among decorations for Edison Plaza cafeteria's Western Round-Up Day celebration.

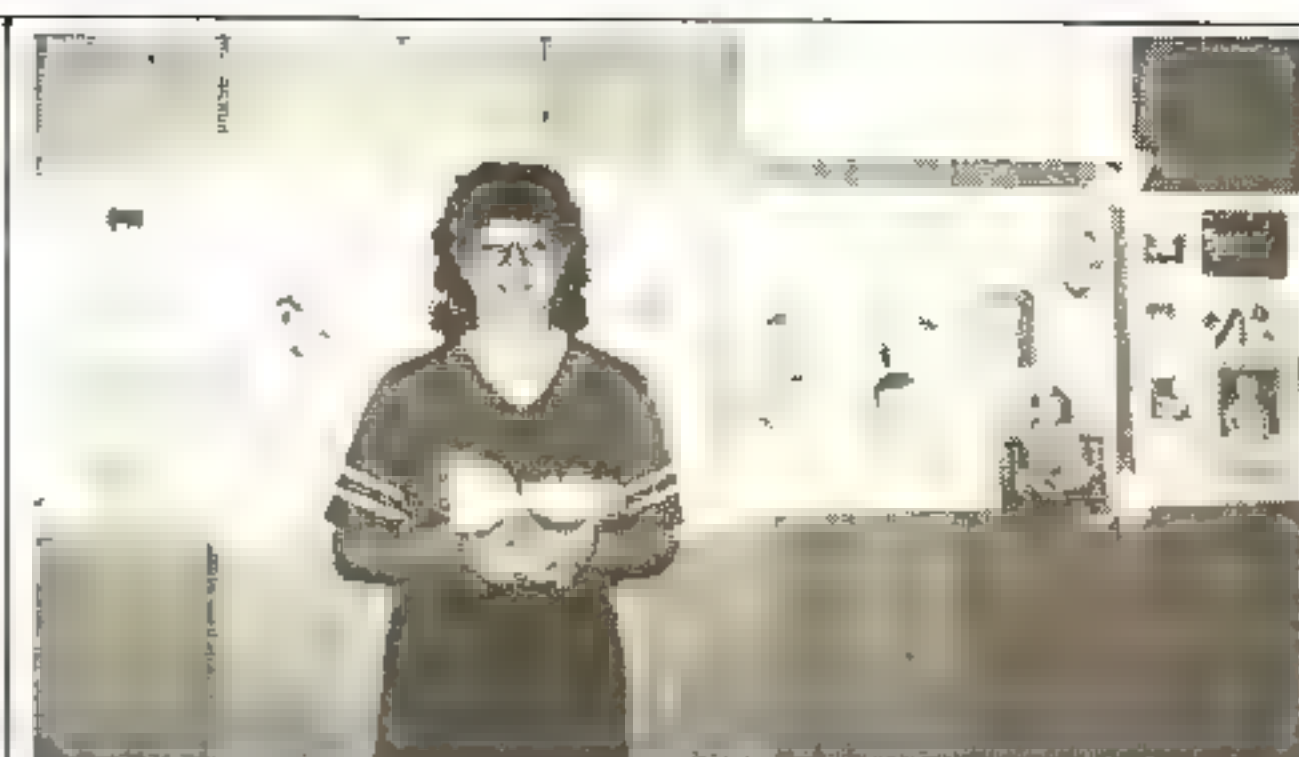
Mrs. Moore, who has been with the company 2½ years, guessed that it would hold 80 ounces. Actually, it held 83½ ounces, according to Clynn Whitworth, cafeteria manager.

## GSUers identify baby photos

A "Guess the Baby" contest was one of the features of a Red, White and Blue Day celebration in the North Boulevard office in Baton Rouge July 2, reports Opal Temple, *Plain Talks* correspondent.

In addition to guessing whose baby photographs were displayed, contestants voted on the cutest babies, too.

Vickie Aaron won the first prize of four wine glasses by correctly guessing the identity of 63 of the 65 babies. Three women



*Vickie Aaron guessed the most babies correctly.*

ties for second place by correctly identifying 55 of the babies. They were Kathi Robinette, Fay Hebert and Tami Anglin. Sundae Holm won the booby prize for having the most incorrect guesses.

Grown-up Gulf States' employees cited for having outstanding baby pictures included:

- Pris Gallagher, cutest baby.
- Ronnie Cole, second cutest baby.
- Bill Benedetto, third cutest baby.
- Kathi Robinette, easiest baby to guess.
- Summa Stelly, hardest baby to guess.
- Lenelle Juban, baby that changed the most.
- Doris Bodden, baby that changed the least.

Many of the North Boulevard employees also observed the day by wearing specially-designed red and white tee shirts with blue lettering. They also enjoyed an all-American lunch of hot dogs, chips and apple pie, paid for with coffee shop funds.



*From left, Pat Davis, Sharon Bourgeois, Diania Harrison, Kutay Mahoney, Vickie Aaron, Connie Fabre, June Smith. Lauren Hebert and Patti Hebert model their GSU tee shirts.*



# ON THE MOVE

**Alexander, Nelson Jr.**, Louisiana Station, to repairman-3rd class, Plant Production.

**Allain, Millard L. Jr.**, Baton Rouge, to garage mechanic-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Andrus, Scot A.**, Nelson Station, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

**Baxley, Darrell E.**, New Caney, to engineering assistant, Electric T&D.

**Beckes, Randy L.**, Baton Rouge, to lineman-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Bennett, Ronald L.**, Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Bourque, Blain A.**, Lake Charles, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

**Breaux, Elizabeth W.**, Beaumont, to engineering helper, Engineering Services.

**Brister, Gregory C.**, Louisiana Station, to turbine-water plant operator, Plant Production.

**Broussard, Wilfred**, Lake Charles, to supervisor-consumer services, Division Consumer Services.

**Butler, Peggy W.**, Beaumont, to personnel clerk, Human Resources.

**Carson, Albert J.**, Louisiana Station, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production.

**Clarke, Kevin M.**, Nelson Station, to electrician-3rd class, Plant Production.

**Clayton, Thomas R.**, Baton Rouge, to general substation supervisor, T&D Substation.

**Cockrill, Gary L.**, Nelson Coal Plant, to shift foreman, Plant Production.

**Cortez, Peter**, Beaumont, to electrician-3rd class, Plant Production.

**Cox, Joseph A.**, Nelson Coal Plant, to general supervisor-production construction, Plant Production.

**Creel, James A.**, Beaumont, to utility worker II, Office Services.

**Dean, Chad D.**, Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-1st class, Electric T&D.

**DeGraw, Gary D.**, Louisiana Station, to electrician-3rd class, Plant Production.

**Delk, Dennis L.**, Beaumont, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

**Doughty, Floyd E.**, Baton Rouge, to service supervisor, T&D Service.

**Douglass, David A.**, Dayton, to lineman-2nd class, Electric T&D.

**Duncan, Thomas W.**, Baton Rouge, to lineman-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Duplechin, Warren L.**, Lake Charles, to garage mechanic-1st class, Electric T&D.

**Easterling, Don A.**, Zachary, to lineman-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Eberhardt, David P.**, Nelson Station, to gas turbine supervisor, Plant Production.

**Ellis, Rupert L.**, Beaumont, to system communications foreman, System Engineering.

**English, John D.**, Lake Charles, to senior purchasing agent, Materials Management.

**Enos, Mildred H.**, Port Arthur, to repairman-2nd class, Plant Production.

**Farris, Gary S.**, Baton Rouge, to lineman-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Fisher, Ernest L.**, Beaumont, to engineering assistant, Electric T&D.

**Fitzpatrick, Kenneth M.**, Beaumont, to associate systems analyst, Computer Applications.

**Gaiser, Deborah P.**, Lewis Creek Station, to secretary, Plant Production.

**Gauthier, Carol J.**, Lafayette, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

**Gourley, Reubin D.**, Louisiana Station, to electrician-1st class, Plant Production.

**Granata, Anthony S.**, formerly of Nelson Coal Plant, mechanical engineer transferred to Plant Production, Nelson Station.

**Granier, Michael J.**, Louisiana Station, to master repairman, Plant Production.

**Green, Debra H.**, Louisiana Station, to auxiliary operator, Plant Production.

**Greer, E. Murry**, formerly of Baton Rouge Human Resources, to training coordinator, System Production, Willow Glen Station.

**Gribble, Keith D.**, Nelson Station, to mechanic helper, Plant Production.

**Griffin, Clarence L.**, Conroe, to utility foreman, T&D Meter.

**Haack, William**, Beaumont, to communications analyst, System Engineering.

**Havard, Ralph W.**, Nelson Coal Plant, to construction specialist, Plant Production.

**Haviland, William P.**, formerly of Nelson Coal Plant, to electrical maintenance supervisor, Beaumont System Production.

**Heath, Myrl D.**, Conroe, to section head, T&D Engineering.

**Hebert, Clofa C.**, Nelson Station, to repairman-3rd class, Plant Production.

**Hernandez, Richard**, Beaumont, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

**Hilbun, Theresa A.**, Baton Rouge, to meter reader, Division Accounting.

**Holmes, Cindy L.**, Willow Glen, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production.

**Hurlburt, Sonja J.**, Beaumont, to electrician-3rd class, Plant Production.

**Johnson, Johnny**, Baton Rouge, to garage mechanic helper, Electric T&D.

**Johnson, Kenneth D.**, Louisiana Station, to mechanic helper, Plant Production.

**Johnson, Randy C.**, Sulphur, to lineman-4th class, Electric T&D.

**Johnson, William Jr.**, Calvert, to lineman-4th class, Electric T&D.

**Justice, James G.**, Conroe, to electrician-2nd class, Plant Production.

**Kaulfus, Jane S.**, Beaumont, to stenographer-senior, Financial Services.

**Kopp, Edward C.**, Louisiana Station, to planning supervisor, Plant Production.

**Lanthier, Gregory J.**, Lake Charles, to apprentice, Electric T&D.

**Lavergne, Vaughn G.**, Port Barre, to district serviceman-2nd class, Electric T&D.

**Leavins, Kenneth D.**, Beaumont, to standards engineer, System Engineering.

**Lytle, Dennis A.**, Baton Rouge, to apprentice, Gas Dept.

**Martin, Darrell B.**, Beaumont, to head fireman, Plant Production.

**Martin, James R.**, Orange, to lineman-4th class, Electric T&D.

**Martin, Semmie**, Baton Rouge, to meterman-1st class, Gas Dept.

**McClusky, Grady E.**, Beaumont, to senior engineering assistant, Engineering Services.

**McGhee, Charley L.**, Baton Rouge, to pipeman-1st class, Gas Dept.

**McLaughlin, Larry W.**, Beaumont, to switchboard operator, Plant Production.

**McMillin, Hugh R.**, Nelson Coal Plant, to maintenance foreman, Plant Production.

**McNeal, Aaron**, Lake Charles, to lineman-4th class, Electric T&D.

**Merwin, George E.**, Port Arthur, to garage mechanic-1st class, Electric T&D.

**Miller, Louis J.**, Vidor, to lineman-3rd class, Electric T&D.

**Mitchell, Tom**, Beaumont, to heavy equipment foreman, T&D Line.

**Moody, James D.**, Nelson Coal Plant, to PMS materials analyst, System Production.

**Moore, Adrian G. Jr.**, Louisiana Station, to test technician-1st class, Plant Production.

**Moore, Carol Y.**, Beaumont, to stenographer-senior, Division Accounting.

**Norwood, William L.**, Conroe, to utility foreman, T&D Meter.

**Parker, William D.**, formerly of Port Arthur, to district accounting supervisor, Mid County.

**Perio, Francis D.**, Port Arthur, to supervisor-credit & collections, Division Accounting.

**Perkins, Willie J.**, Zachary, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

**Pettus, William Jr.**, Louisiana Station, to mechanic helper, Plant Production.

**Poullard, Delores G.**, Beaumont, to test technician-1st class, Plant Production.

**Rainwater, Lawrence L.**, formerly of Vidor, to heavy equipment foreman, Beaumont T&D Line.

**Ramsey, Donnell A.**, Port Arthur, to storeroom supervisor, T&D Storeroom.

**Reynolds, William B.**, formerly of Nelson Coal Plant, to coordinator-furniture & office equipment standards, Beaumont General Services.

**Rose, Donna S.**, Beaumont, to second fireman, Plant Production.

**Sanderson, Perry E.**, Beaumont, to service supervisor, T&D Service.

**Schaefer, Billie A.**, formerly of Lewis Creek Station, to personnel department clerk, Conroe Human Resources.

**Steger, Jerry K.**, formerly of Nelson Coal Plant, to purchasing agent, Beaumont Materials Management.

**Swope, Michael**, Orange, to substation mechanic-2nd class, Electric T&D.

**Tate, William G. III**, Louisiana Station, to mechanic helper, Plant Production.

**Teel, Gene K.**, Dayton, to collector, Division Accounting.

**Thompson, Elmer A.**, Port Arthur, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production.

**Tilley, Sylvester II**, Louisiana Station, to turbine-water plant operator, Plant Production.

**Walker, Calvin G.**, Beaumont, to serviceman-4th class, Electric T&D.

**Watson, Harold H. Jr.**, Lafayette, to lineman-1st class, Electric T&D.

**Wease, Dusty L.**, Louisiana Station, to repairman-1st class, Plant Production.

**Weidner, Michael F.**, Sabine Station, to storeroom supervisor, Plant Production.

**Wheat, Patrick M.**, Denham Springs, to lineman-2nd class, Electric T&D.

**Williams, Milton R.**, Orange, to meterman-1st class, Electric T&D.

**Wright, Virginia A.**, Beaumont, secretary-executive transferred to Beaumont staff of senior vice president-Accounting Services & Rates.



## AIF issues midyear report

The U.S. nuclear power program entered the home stretch of 1982 like a runner poised in mid-stride. If it maintains its present momentum, the atom could land this year in second place, behind coal, as a source of electricity. Of all the contenders in the energy race, only nuclear power is likely to increase dramatically its share of the market: a 7 percent annual growth in power production, as half a dozen new plants come on line in 1982. This is 10 times the increase projected for electricity consumption overall this year.

Those statistics appear in the midyear outlook report from the Atomic Industrial Forum (AIF). With nearly 70 reactors under construction and a burgeoning fuels and services market developing around the 80-plus units already on line, the nuclear industry is expected to hum to the tune of a \$24-30 billion annual volume through the 1980s. "Nuclear power will be an important component of the electric utility industry's \$30-billion investment in plants and equipment this year," says Carl Walske, AIF president. He adds that people "tend not to recognize that through this \$30-billion outlay the utility industry is making an unprecedented downpayment on the future of America."

## EPRI reports new arrester

A \$525,000 effort to develop a safer device for protecting utility distribution systems from lightning current surges appears to have been successful. Researchers working under an Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) contract have developed a new surge arrester that is not susceptible to fragmentary failure.

One of the more common and

inexpensive pieces of equipment on utility distribution lines is the surge arrester, designed to protect circuits by sending abnormal currents — caused by lightning or switching surges — to ground rather than to other parts of the utility system.

But there is sometimes a problem with conventional surge arresters. On rare occasions they fail; and in a small percentage of failures, they fragment in such a way that nearby equipment can be damaged and utility linemen possibly injured.

In an effort to eliminate this risk, EPRI funded a study to determine the cause of these fragmentary failures and strategies for preventing them. Now, after nearly three years of work through General Electric Co., a new 10-kilovolt surge arrester that resists shattering has been developed.

According to Herb Songster, EPRI project manager, fragmentary failure of distribution surge arresters is a relatively uncommon problem, occurring perhaps with only 0.05 percent of the units in service in a given year. Still, with millions of arresters being used, this can mean from 5,000 to 10,000 potentially dangerous failures a year across the country.

## Groups support pipeline act

Officials of the country's largest consumer advocacy group, the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, the nation's electric utility companies — both public- and investor-owned — and the U.S. coal industry have urged Congress to approve coal slurry pipeline legislation.

Testifying as representatives of the Alliance for Coal and Competitive Transportation, a coalition of 20 major national organizations and 19 regional, state and local groups, a five-

member panel highlighted the pressing need for more competition in the coal transportation market and the benefits they see for consumers, workers and the nation's economic health.

"The availability of competition in the form of coal slurry pipelines could save consumers billions of dollars," Alex Radin, vice president of the Consumer Federation of America and executive director of the American Public Power Association, told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which was holding a hearing on S. 1844, the Coal Distribution and Utilization Act of 1981.

Radin told the Senate panel that benefits of coal slurry pipelines to consumers include:

- reduced cost of transporting coal,
- facilitating increased use of domestic coal to replace expensive foreign fuel oil,
- increased potential for export of coal, which would benefit the nation's balance of payments,
- increased competition in the transportation industry.
- use of less water than synthetic fuels,
- and substitution of quiet, efficient and safe underground pipes for some additional unit trains.

Robert A. Georgine, president of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department, said that more than 800,000 of his 4.3 million members are without jobs and that the unemployment rate in the construction industry is more than double the national average.

He added that coal slurry pipeline construction would also mean more coal production jobs for miners and suppliers to the coal industry.



# COMMENTS

## Avoided Costs: Help for Supplemental Sources

*Editor's note: "Avoided costs" is becoming a common term in the electric utility industry, but many employees have little understanding of what it means. Under guidelines laid out in the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act, or PURPA, utilities are required to buy supplemental power at rates equal to their "avoided costs." The Public Utility Commission of Texas has issued regulations defining avoided costs, while the Louisiana Public Service Commission is in the final stages of the same process.*

### **What are avoided costs?**

Generally speaking, avoided costs are all expenditures for producing and delivering electricity that utilities save through practices that reduce load or growth, or through purchase of electricity from non-utility sources. This latter means is the method governed by the provisions of PURPA. Such sources may include independent hydro, geothermal or biomass projects as well as cogeneration facilities.\* Two kinds of cost may be avoided. One is primarily for the fuel the utility would have to use to produce an equal amount of energy in existing plants; the other is for new or replacement capacity that would otherwise be built.

\*Cogeneration refers to the process of jointly producing both electricity and heat to be used for industrial, commercial or other purposes.

### **Why were avoided costs established?**

To guarantee a market to small power producers and cogenerators, thereby encouraging the development of renewable resources and providing incentives for recapturing some of the energy used in industrial, commercial or other facilities.

### **Who determines what avoided costs should be?**

The final rates are set by state regulatory commissions. Title II of PURPA said that small power producers and cogenerators should be fairly paid for the electricity they sell to utilities, and that state commissions and large utilities should establish "just and reasonable rates" for such sales by March 1981. But setting up the rate structure turned out to be an unexpectedly complex process, and only 23 states were able to meet the March deadline.

### **Is there a fixed scale?**

No. Avoided costs can vary from less than 3 cents per kilowatthour (when the non-utility source displaces nuclear or coal-generated power on a system with ample capacity) to 8 cents or more per kwh

(when oil-fired power is displaced, particularly on a system short of capacity).

### **What are the major advantages of avoided costs?**

Since these rates give independent producers a financial incentive to develop supplemental resources, they should help make more energy available. This may diminish our dependence on foreign oil. Also, development of small decentralized projects could make it easier to respond quickly to growing demand, and perhaps defer the need for expensive plant construction.

### **How about disadvantages?**

The rules may encourage cogenerators who rely on expensive oil or gas to burn still more fuel. There is some concern about increased air pollution from a growing number of small decentralized power sources. And utilities, to whom reliability is extremely important, could end up with the expensive responsibility of maintaining and supervising the self-generators' equipment.

### **Will avoided costs mean lower bills for consumers?**

Not necessarily. In their rush to comply with PURPA guidelines, some commissions have set rates higher than actual avoided costs, thereby forcing utility customers to subsidize the operations of the small power producer. Avoided costs also mean a windfall profit for some cogenerators who are guaranteed high avoided cost rates no matter how cheaply they can generate electricity. In fact, such rates may encourage large electricity users to leave the utility system and become cogenerators. This loss of revenue, of course, leads to higher rates for the utility's remaining customers.



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**Q.**

**Will cutting back on electricity improve the energy situation?**

**A.**

Not necessarily. Remember, electricity can be generated from a whole range of domestic resources: coal, nuclear, gas, hydropower, solar and other renewables. So using it instead of imported oil for jobs like heating and industrial processing would benefit the nation. According to a new report\* from the Energy Research Group, Inc., electricity could displace up to 10.4 quads of oil — that's nearly 90% of net U.S. imports in 1980.

*\* Oil Use Replacement: The Electric Alternative*

